REMARKS

Claims 1-55 are pending in the application. Claims 1-5, 7-8, 10-18, 20-21, 24-28, 30-31, 34-38, 40-41, 44-48, 50-51, and 54-55 were rejected under §102 as being anticipated by Mittra. Claims 10, 23, 33, 43, and 53 were rejected under §103 over Mittra in view of Garrity. Claims 6, 9, 19, 22, 29, 32, 39, 42, 49 and 52 were rejected under §103 over Mittra in view of Dobbins. None of the claims is currently amended. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The presently claimed invention distinguishes the cited references because access control information is distributed to access devices. As described in the Specification at page 5, in a typically prior art embodiment in which authentication is performed at the access device, the access device retrieves access control information from the main server upon receiving a request from a host to join the television multicast group, and then uses the access control information to authenticate the host. Clearly, the access control information includes group membership indicia. Mittra specifically teaches at column 7, lines 64-65 that **only the Group Security Controller** (which the Office likens to the distribution device) **has information concerning group membership**. In other words, the presently claimed invention has the access device performing access control based on group membership information obtained beforehand from the distribution device, whereas Mittra withholds the group membership information from the TIs and therefore has no access control. Rather than access control, Mittra relies on distribution of keys to prevent decryption of the multicast data, i.e., Mittra provides the encrypted data to all requestors, which the claimed invention does not do. Each of the independent claims 1, 15, 25, 35, 45, and 55 therefore distinguishes Mittra by reciting that multicast group access control information is distributed from a distribution device to a plurality of access devices for use by the access devices in authenticating subsequent requests by individual host devices to join a

television channel multicast group. Withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1, 15, 25, 35, 45, and 55 is therefore requested. Claims 2-14, 16-24, 26-34, 36-44, and 46-54 are dependent claims which further distinguish the invention, and which are allowable for the same reasons as their respective base claims. Withdrawal of the rejections of those dependent claims is therefore also requested.

The Office maintains the objection to claim 1 for lack of antecedent basis for the term "the access device." Applicant respectfully traverses again. The antecedent basis is present in the claim as follows in bold type:

> 1. (currently amended) An access control method for an internet television system where each television channel is carried over a different multicast group, and subscribers join a particular multicast group in order to receive a particular channel, the access control method comprising:
>
> distributing multicast group access control information from a distribution device to **a plurality of access devices** for use by the access devices in authenticating subsequent requests by individual host devices to join a television channel multicast group in order to reduce delay in authentication when a host device changes television channels, wherein each access device is logically closer to the host device from which the access device receives the request than the distribution device;
>
> receiving, by one of the access devices, a subsequent request by one of the host devices to join the television channel multicast group in order to change television channels;
>
> determining, by the access device, whether the host device is authorized to join the television channel multicast group, and receive a particular television channel, based upon the access control information distributed from the distribution device; and
>
> admitting, by the access device, the host device to the television channel multicast group if and only if the host device is determined to be authorized to join the television channel multicast group,
>
> whereby the access device receives the access control information before it is needed for determining whether the host device is authorized to join the multicast group, thereby facilitating changing channels by reducing authentication delay.

Withdrawal of the objection based on lack of antecedent basis is therefore requested.

Claims 15 and 45 were again rejected under §101 based on the Office's new policy for computer software claims. Claim 45 was changed in the previous Response as suggested by the Office to overcome the rejection, yet the rejection has been copied into this Office Action. With regard to claim 15, Applicant respectfully traverses again. Claim 15 is an apparatus claim which recites tangible parts of a distribution device. It should also be noted that the specification teaches "hardware logic" as a type of logic.[1] Further, Applicant has amended claim 15 to emphasize that the multicast group control information is maintained in memory, and access control information is distributed via an interface. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 15 under §101 is therefore requested.

[1] Page 12, lines 7-12.

Applicants have made a diligent effort to place the claims in condition for allowance. However, should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Holmes W. Anderson, Applicants' Attorney, at 978-264-4001 (X305) so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible. This application is now considered to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Date

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